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Folk and/or Traditional Arts Fellowships Guidelines

Folk and/or Traditional Arts Fellowships support individual folk artists who demonstrate the highest level of skill and accomplishment in their craft. The Folk and Traditional Arts are defined as those artistic practices which are community or family-based and express that community's aesthetic heritage and tradition.

Award Amount: Two awards are given each year. One is for \$7,000 and the other is \$3,000.

Who can apply:

- Folk and/or Traditional Art artists that live in Rhode Island.

Timeline

- Grants open for applications on Feb. 1.
- Deadline is April 1 at 11:59 p.m.
- Funding period supports project occurring between July 1 and June 30, the state's fiscal year.
- Grant notifications will be sent in mid-June (tentative).
- Final report is due the July 31 following the project period.

Eligibility

You must:

- Be 18 years of age or older.
- Have lived in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration, driver's license or state issued identification, and voter registration - regardless of whether you own or rent your home. You must reside in the state for at least 183 days per year.
- Be a legal resident of the United States with a tax identification number (either Social Security number or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number). This includes refugees, immigrants, and temporary residents. This does not include people in the country on a tourist visa.
- Submit only one application per grant deadline to the Folk Arts Fellowship Program.
- Be a practicing folk and/or traditional artist.
- Meet with [Elena Calderón Patiño](mailto:Elena.Patino@arts.ri.gov) if you are a first-time applicant.

You are ineligible:

- A current recipient of the General Operating Support for Artists grant.
- A staff member or Council member of RISCA, or an immediate family member of a staff or Council member.
- Currently enrolled in an arts degree seeking program or attending high school full time.
- Applying for the Folk and/or Arts Apprenticeship at this deadline.
- Have received this grant in the last two years.
- Applying for another RISCA grant at the same deadline.
- Delinquent on any final reports for previous RISCA grants.

Funding Rules and Restrictions

The Folk Art Fellowship Grant is unrestricted funding. We ask and expect you to spend the funds in a way that help you advance your art practice and art career.

- All grant awards are contingent upon the availability of funds from the Rhode Island State General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).
- Two awards are given each year. One is for \$7,000 and the other is \$3,000.
- Grant applications are considered on a competitive basis. Award amounts may vary cycle to cycle depending on available funds, number of applications, and the panel decision-making. [For more information on our Decision-Making Process, visit our Applicant Resources web page.](#)
- You have the option of declining the grant award with no penalties.
- If you receive a grant, you must credit RISCA on all marketing materials. [See Acknowledging RISCA.](#)

Grant funding cannot be used for the following:

- Capital projects, including the construction or renovation of buildings, or additions to buildings.
- Any fundraising expenses such as creating rewards for a Kickstarter or hosting a fundraising event for any purpose.
- Addressing, eliminating, or reducing existing debt.
- Entertainment and hospitality, including expenses for activities such as receptions, parties, galas, etc. Specific costs that have a core programmatic purpose and are included in your budget may be allowable.
- Regranting.
- Activities that are associated with a graduate or undergraduate degree program or for which academic credit is received.
- Applications for projects that proselytize or promote religious activities, or which take place as part of a religious service.
- Programming, performances, and exhibitions unavailable and/or inaccessible to the public.
- Expenses incurred or activity happening outside of the award period.

Accommodations and Access Policy

It is the policy of RISCA that no qualified individual shall, based on disability, be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of the agency or the agency's grantees, or be subjected to discrimination.

For questions on accommodations, contact Seamus Hames, Arts Education Program Director and 504 Accessibility Coordinator, at 401-222-6994 or seamus.hames@arts.ri.gov.

How to Apply

RISCA only accepts applications through the online grant system Foundant. Please note there are two different grant portals. One for individual artists and one for organizations. If you have questions about whether you or an organization already has a profile in the system or if you have questions about logging in, please contact one of the program directors via the [staff directory](#).

To log in or set up an applicant profile: [Online Grant Application Portal for Individuals](#)

Application

Section 1: For RISCA staff to determine if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements to move to panel review. Includes an eligibility checklist and required uploads.

Section 2: For Panel to learn about the project and to review and score it based on the evaluation criteria. There are three parts.

- **Logistics** - Narrative question describing the type of folk and/or traditional art is practiced by the applicant.
- **Artistic Vibrancy and Impact** - Narrative question(s) and testimonial upload to demonstrate how the folk artist demonstrates high artistic merit. Narrative questions describing when, where, how long, and from whom did the folk artist learn this folk and traditional art form. Includes work samples and testimonials. Question about how many years the applicant has practice this folk and/or traditional art.
- **Program specific** - Narrative question(s) and testimonial upload to demonstrate how this project aligns with the specific grant program. For Folk Arts Fellowship describe why it is important that this folk and traditional art continues to be passed down and practiced.

Evaluation Criteria

Panel reviewers will use the following criteria to evaluate and recommend applications for funding.

Logistics

- The application clearly describes the type of the folk and traditional art practiced.

Artistic Vibrancy and Impact

- Quality and artistic merit of the folk and/or traditional artist is clearly proven in the support materials provided by applicant.
- When, where, how long, and from whom did the folk artist learn this folk and traditional art form was clearly established.
- The application clearly demonstrates how many years the applicant has practice this folk and/or traditional art.

Folk Arts Fellowship

- The applicant demonstrated why is it important that this folk and traditional art continues to be passed down and practiced.

Per NEA enabling legislation, The NEA requires that state arts agencies include artistic merit and artistic excellence in their evaluative criteria. However, the NEA allows state arts agencies to define artistic merit and excellence for themselves and in conversation with their communities. For this grant program, artistic merit and artistic excellence is defined as Artistic Vibrancy and Impact.

Support Materials

For Panel Review: Required Documents and Support Materials for Evaluation

- Artist Biography (maximum one page).
- Artist Resume (maximum one page).
- Artist Statement (maximum one page).
- Artwork Samples: Documentation of 5-10 pieces of folk-artform, performances, folk artist teaching a class, or lesson, or of folk artist creating the folk artform, or practicing the folk art etc.
 - This may include images (jpegs only), video, audio, and/or writing. Pieces of art include but are not limited to a short film; dance; a painting; a piece of jewelry; a song; a sculpture; a performance in a public place; a poem; a class/lesson/workshop you taught or work of your students; or a quilt.
 - You may submit a maximum of 10 images; and 10 minutes of video; and 10 minutes of audio; and up to 20 pages of writing.

Note: You must upload documentation of art in the Upload boxes below or upload documentation of art to a Google Drive folder, open to everyone with the link or link and password.

- [Work Samples List template](#) (Required: Use the RISCA Template).

Describe each image including the title, year, medium, any additional technical details, location, when it took place, and who participated also add 1-3 sentences of context about the image and how it is meant to be experienced. Please make sure images match the number of descriptions.

- Link to Artist website, if available.
- Link to Artist social media, if available.
- Link to Creative Ground profile, if available.
- Testimonial or Letter of Support. This can be quotes, a short testimonial, or some other statement from someone familiar with the mentor artist's folk and traditional art form and its impact on the community. Maximum one page.

Glossary

Rhode Island residency: Have been domiciled in Rhode Island for at least one year at the time of application. This means Rhode Island is your primary residence, and is the address you use for legal forms, state income taxes, car registration, driver's license or state issued identification, and voter registration - regardless of whether you own or rent your home. You must reside in the state for at least 183 days per year.